



CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD

Meeting Minutes #702

April 12, 2007



Chairman Vernon Chong
Randal Bressette, Vice Chairman
Tom Moran, Board Member

Jake I. Alarid, Board Member
Alice Astafan, Board Member
Colin Shadell, Board Member

The California Veterans Board met at the Legion of Valor Museum in Fresno, California at 3:00 PM

ROLL CALL

Present: Vernon Chong, Chairman, Randal Bressette, Vice-Chairman, Member, Alice Astafan, Member, Thomas Moran, Member, Colin Shadell, Member, Jake Alarid, Member
Chairman Chong presided

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

OLD BUSINESS

A) Board Policies: Policy Book – review of policies and approval

The Board continued the review and approval of policies from where they left off at the last meeting.

The Board discussed a proposed policy submitted by Colin Shadell to encourage Home Administrators to approve payment from the MWR fund for a representative of the Allied Counsel to attend the Board Meetings. This item will be discussed at Friday's meeting.

Chairman Chong advised that due to a new member joining the Board, some of the Committee assignments would be changed. Chairman Chong appointed new Board Member, Tom Moran to the Homes Committee, and as Chairman of the Policies and Procedures Committee. Member Bressette will take Leo Burke's position on the Veterans Services Committee and Member Alarid will become Chair. Chairman Chong, will Chair the Administrative Committee.

The Board agreed to create a separate book for the new procedures entitled "Board Administrative Procedures".

The Board voted to delete the following policies and rewrite as a procedure: A3, A8, A9, A10.

The Board voted to delete policies A11 and A12.

The Board voted to delete Sections F and G as they are incorporated in policy B9.

Member Moran moved to approve the policies as discussed. Member Astafan seconded.

B. Policy C-13 – Ongoing Coordination

This policy is on hold for State statute.

C. Board Procedures

The Board voted to approve two new procedures: “Board Responsibilities” and “Rules of Decorum For Public Meetings”.

C. Function of Board – Oversight vs. Advisory Board Discussion

Rob Wilson reviewed the question of the Board’s role as oversight vs. advisory.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned 5:00 PM



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Colin Shadell, Board Member

The California Veterans Board met at the Legion of Valor Museum in Fresno, California at 9:00 AM

ROLL CALL

Present: Vernon Chong, Chairman, Randal Bressette, Vice-Chairman, Member, Alice Astafan, Member, Thomas Moran, Member, Colin Shadell, Member, Jake Alarid, Member
Chairman Chong presided

OPENING CEREMONIES

- A) INVOCATION**
- B) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

WELCOMING REMARKS/INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Chong welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting. He then introduced Arthur Hill, Museum Director and invited him to make the opening remarks. The Chairman then introduced the members of the Board and provided background on each Board member. He also introduced the newest Board member Tom Moran. Chairman Chong introduced Mr. Thomas Johnson, the Secretary of the California Department of Veterans Affairs.

Secretary Johnson welcomed the group and introduced his staff, Chief Legal Counsel Rob Wilson, Deputy Secretary of Communications, J.P. Tremblay, Chief of Administrative Services Jack Kirwan, and Anne Middleton, Manager of the Fresno CalVet Office.

MINUTES

Executive Officer, Bonnie Kelly

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the minutes of the previous meeting held February 15-16, 2007. Board member Astafan moved to approve February 15-16, 2007 minutes. Board member Moran seconded.
Motion unanimously approved and carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Charlie Waters
Dr. David Salopek

OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Chong informed the meeting that the Board at the Thursday meeting completed the bi-annual review of Board Policies.

DEPARTMENT FORUM

A. Department Update

- The Secretary briefed the group on the Department's Strategic Plan and Mission Statement and outlined the top objectives from the Plan as presented to the Governor's Office:
 - i. Sign the MOA with the federal government for the three homes – West L.A., Lancaster and Ventura. The MOA should be signed this month and construction will be started in June. The grand openings will be on June 12 for Lancaster, June 13 for Ventura, June 14 in Los Angeles.
 - ii. Secure passage of HR 551 to expand the pool of veteran's eligible for the qualified veterans mortgage bond. Also to add additional qualified bond money to augment the pool of money available to veterans who are not first time home buyers as authorized by HR 6111. \$140 Million of QMB money has been secured, with an additional \$50 Million, depending upon our sale of these bonds and the use of the monies, may be available by Fall. HR 551 currently has 28 co-sponsors.
 - iii. Open Alzheimer's Unit at Yountville, which is a year behind schedule due to faulty workmanship. The opening will be held somewhere between July 10-14.
 - iv. Expand the outreach to veterans regarding state and federal benefits. Jack Kirwan described the report that was required to be prepared for the legislature entitled "Strategies to Improve California's Utilization of Veterans Benefits", with a timeline of November 7.

- **Redding and Fresno Veterans Homes**

SB 630 is a bill to ensure that the dollars will be there for the Fresno and Redding homes - \$57 Million for Fresno, and \$30 Million for Redding. The Public Works Board is meeting today on this bill, and it should be approved today. During the next week, the Department will solicit qualification for the master architect to do the design build for Fresno and Redding.

The VA is considering opening a clinic at the Redding and Fresno sites.

- The Secretary discussed the concerns generated by the incident at Walter Reed Hospital. He noted that this was an isolated occurrence and that the VA healthcare system overall meets very high standards. To ensure the same high level of care, the Secretary and Undersecretary Brautigan conducted an inspection of our State homes.
- The Secretary reviewed a report entitled "The Changing Face of California's Nursing Home Industry" which discusses the challenges of operating a nursing home and is published by the California Healthcare Foundation. It covers quality of care indicators, the nursing staff turnover rates, average number of citations, and quality of care indicators.

- **The Commission on the Future of America's Veterans Meeting in San Diego May 29**

This meeting has been cancelled and will be rescheduled in the Fall. The Commission is a non-profit, separately organized commission. Their purpose is to review the overall provisions of benefits for veterans and how they integrate with DOD in the transition process and determine what the systems we have in this country to support our veterans are. They have already met in West Virginia and Florida, and the Department is hoping to have an opportunity to provide input at its next meeting.

- The Secretary announced that the San Diego Office has opened with a full time manager.
- The Secretary discussed the Department's budget process, which includes the Board's budget.

C. Significant Legal Matters

Rob Wilson reported that between 1999-2006 there were 17 citations issued by the Department of Health Services against our facilities. Only 2 of the 17 have occurred during this Administration. The Department has resolved these 17 citations and has entered into a settlement agreement for fifty percent less than the original \$438,000. The money will be taken out of our Medi-Cal reimbursements, which is allowed by law.

NEW BUSINESS

A) Committee Reports

Member Astafan reported that during a visit to Washington, D.C., she personally delivered letters in support of HR 551 to the House members.

Member Bressette advised that the Legislative Committee, along with the Executive Officer and JP Tremblay, will be meeting with the Senate and Assembly members on April 30 and May 1 for a brief "meet and greet".

The Chairman announced that with the addition of a new Board Member and the departure of a Member, new Committee assignments have been made. These will be presented at the next meeting.

B) Proposed Policy C-14 Non-Veteran Spouses Remaining as Residents of Homes

Chairman Chong advised that this policy helps to clarify the status of a non-veteran spouse and will be acted upon at the next meeting.

C) Recognizing Yountville's Anniversary

The Yountville Veterans Home will be recognizing their 123rd anniversary on April 22, where Chairman Chong will be presenting a resolution to the Home.

D) Resolution Recognizing Leo Burke

Chairman Chong read the resolution that will be presented to outgoing Board Member, Leo Burke where he will be honored at the Secretary's Conference on April 20.

Secretary Johnson advised that a meeting with the Governor has been arranged by the Department for Leo Burke in April to be recognized for his service to the Board.

E) MWR Fund to Reimburse Travel for Allied Council

Member Alarid made a motion to encourage Home Administrators to approve payment

from the MWR fund for a representative of the Allied Counsel to attend the Board Meetings. The motion was seconded by Member Astafan.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

No legislative issues were discussed.

COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Member Bressette reported that the Secretary issued a letter for Member Bressette's financial office to use to encourage the voluntary contribution to the Veterans Quality of Life Fund listed in the California tax return. Due to this letter, his office has raised \$5,000 for the Fund.

The Secretary noted that the Vet Fund, which allows us to provide extra dollars for worthy projects, will be holding a golf tournament in Ventura on May 18.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 11:30 AM.